
S C H I S M

Try'd and Condemn'd, &c.

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SCHISM

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TRY'D and CONDEMN'D

BY THE

SENTIMENTS

OF THE

Most Eminent WRITERS

AMONG THE

DISSENTERS.

Written for the

Conviction of GAINSAYERS, and
those who complain of PERSECUTION,
upon Occasion of the late ACT for Pre-
venting the Growth of SCHISM.

By a LAY-HAND.

C. J.
K.

L O N D O N :

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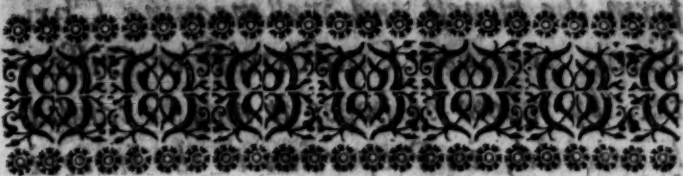
Written for the

Conviction of GAINSBYERS and
those who complain of PERSECUTION
upon Opinion of the ACT for
curbing the Growth of SCHISM.

By a LAY-MAN.

L O N D O N .

Printed for J. Widdow in St. Andrew's Church-yard
near St. Martin's Church in London. 1711.
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THE PREFACE.



Considering the great Variety of Opinions and Humours that are in the World, and the course Treatment even of the most celebrated Authors, upon the most sublime Subjects; a Man had need to have a good Share of Courage, and a firm Assurance of the Justice of his Cause, that ventures to appear publickly in such a censorious Age.

The Author does presume he is thus supported; but declares, that what he has here written is purely design'd to inform

The P R E F A C E.

form the Honest and well meaning Christian, whether Conformist or Dissenter, by whom he hopes it may be candidly receiv'd, in Proportion to the Integrity of his Intentions.

I found, upon the Publication of the Bill against SCHISM, that many People held hot Disputes for, and against, the Bill, who did not in Reality know what was meant by Schism; and likewise since that, several pernicious Pamphlets have come Abroad, which, instead of convincing People what it was, have directly tended to confirm them in their Schismatical Principles. I waited for some Time, to see if the Learned would undertake to clear this Point, against these blind leaders of the blind: But being disappointed in that Expectation, I here present the World with such Thoughts as have occur'd to my own Reading and Experience: And I promise the Reader he shall find no Saviour of a poysonous Bitter in it, unless his inveterate
Prejudice

THE PREFACE.

Prejudice, shall prompt him maliciously
to pervert the peaceable Design of it.

Whatever Recitals are met with here,
I assure the World, are very genuine; and
the Collection being largely made from
the Authors of greatest Note among
the Dissenters, may serve to convince
Men of their Sentiments of Schism, and
leave the Brethren of the same Professi-
on (I think) without any Possibility of
Cavil or Answer.

The whole was intended and ready for
the Press before the Decease of our late
most gracious and truly pious QUEEN;
but it is certainly not too late, even now,
to promote Unity among our selves, and
a most affectionate Loyalty and filial O-
bedience to our Sovereign Lord King
GEORGE, which is best demonstrated
by our chearful Compliance with those
wholesome Laws, which have been ena-
cted for the Benefit of the Subject, and
whereof

The PREFACE.

whereof his Majesty (under God) is the
great Protector and Defender.

And now let every true hearted Subject implore the Divine Goodness, to preserve him from all the Hellish Designs of his Enemies; to bless him with Health of Body, and Soundness of Understanding; with a numerous Progeny of Long-liv'd Princes; with wise and faithful Counsellors, and a truly Religious Clergy, with an honest and judicious Magistracy, and an obedient Commonalty; and when it shall please the Almighty King of Kings, to call him hence to the Kingdom of Glory, may it be after a long, very long, happy, and peaceable Reign over these Kingdoms.

So prayeth

J. C.

SCHISM

S C H I S M
Try'd and Condemn'd, &c.

THE Felicity of any Kingdom or Nation consists in the having whole-
some and good Laws establish'd;
The Supream Governor, or Govern-
ors, conscientiously distributing Ju-
stice to all over whom they are set; as also
in having an obedient People, not only quiet
and easy under the lawfull Commands of their
Rulers, but likewise ready and willing to assist
at all Calls for the National Good; not murmu-
ring at any Act of Government, that does not
square with their Opinions or Fancies; but in
all Things submitting themselves as becometh
good Subjects, and faithful Servants of our Savi-
our Christ.

In the World are many and different Governments. Not to speak of Theocratical, as Patriarchal and Judicial, under the old Law, which were of God's immediate Appointment, I

B

hall

shall take Notice of the three Sorts now in Being, namely, *Democratical*, A Government by the People, that is, by the Heads of the People, Elected by them; and very frequently as Arbitrary, tho' not so discernible by the People, as any Government. Of this Sort are the *Seven United Provinces*, where the People are kept under as great Subjection, as under any other Christian Government. Secondly, *Aristocratical*, viz. Government by Nobles; of this Sort is *Venice*, where Government is likewise Arbitrary; and no Wonder, for that the Popish Religion is establish'd there, *That* and *Arbitrary Power* being always inseparable. Thirdly and lastly, *Regal*, Under which we are govern'd. And although this Sort of Government, in other Kingdoms in Christendom, is as Arbitrary as any of the rest, yet, to our Glory and Happiness, this of *Great Britain* is so order'd and settled by good and wholesom Laws, by mutual Agreement of the King and People, that when the Prince is conscientiously obey'd, Justice to the People equally distributed, and a harmonious Agreement among the People cultivated; then is the Prince not only the most Powerful, but also most Honourable, and the People the most prosperous and happy.

And as the Laws of this Realm are made by the King, Lords, and Commons, so do they tend to the Good of the whole. Tho' tis morally impossible to make any Law, that shall not be to the Detriment of some few, who must submit, as in all publick Affairs, the Minor to the Major: And it ought to be concluded, that the Legislature, from their great Wisdom, aiming at the

the National Good, take all possible Precautions, that as few shall suffer as may be.

And as the Constitution of this Kingdom consisteth in the Prerogative of the Prince, and the Liberties and Properties of the People mutually; so do the People quietly enjoy their Rights and Liberties; and also many Advantages by the Prerogative, that being intended for the Good of the People in general; and when the Government fails not to act righteously, is always so. And as there are some who will not conform to our happy Establishment; so may we reasonably judge, neither will they be easy under any Government. And for this Set of Men, tho' it is some Unhappiness to every Nation to have such People in it, for that they will certainly make others uneasy also; yet as it is the Business of those in Authority, to take all lawful Measures to preserve the Constitution sound, by cutting off the rotten Members of its Body; So will all good and peaceable Subjects rejoice, when the Laws are put in Execution against incorrigible Offenders. And without this coercive Power of the Law, no Man can securely rest in Possession of his just Rights, nor call any Thing his own.

And as the Government of this Land, in Temporals, is supported by wholesom and the most excellent Laws; so is it in Matters Spiritual alike establish'd, its Hierarchy being Episcopal: So that those in Holy Orders have a right Ordination, and by their excelling in Learning, are truly qualify'd to expound the Holy Scriptures; which accordingly they do to all that honestly and religiously conform themselves to the esta-

blish'd Church, which keeps the Golden Medium between the two Extreams, viz. on one Side of the grand Abyss of Popery, consisting of erroneous Doctrines in Principles, and Idolatry, and Superstition in Worship: And on the other Hand, of the many headed *Hydra* of confused Sects and Opinions: And this is no light Conjecture, but solid Truth in every Particular, each of those Parties aiming at the Destruction of this Church; The Papist principally, at the whole Reformation throughout the World. The Dissenters, by being deluded by the *Romish* Emissaries, are persuaded to believe, that the establish'd Worship of this Land is no other than the Popish Mass itself, and so brought to abhor, not only the Matter of the Common Prayer, but even the very Appellation or Name of it. And by the Instigation of the great Enemy of Mankind, and the aforesaid Incendiaries of *Rome*, many are brought to an Abhorrence of a Religious Conformity, grounded upon such Pleas, as are in themselves not only trifling, but so very vain, that, as the Apostle in another Case says, *'tis a Shame even to speak of them*; all which have been by many Learned Men of this Church largely and amply confuted. The most Learned among the Dissenters themselves, when, and wherever they have been uppermost in Government, have condemn'd Separation, from what was then establish'd, as Schismatical. Instances of this Kind there are innumerable: I shall not mention many, for that I mean not to swell this into a Volume, intending only by these to show the Ignorant the Nature of Schism, and dangerous Consequence of continuing in it.

Schism,

Schism then, in general, signifies Dividing, or Separating, in Contempt of the Law.

And with Relation to Religion, it imports a causeless Separating from, or not conforming to, the establish'd Church of the Nation, wherein we live, being free-born Subjects. Some have made Use of this Plea, *viz.* They were born of Dissenting Parents, so were never of us, and how can they be said to go out from us? But this will appear very trifling, and can never take away the Charge of *Schism*, if we consider first, That all People are bound to obey the Government, in all Things commanded by them, that are lawful in the Sight of God; and secondly, That nothing is commanded, with Relation to Religion, but what is agreeable to the Holy Scriptures, the Mind and Will of God: And this I shall endeavour to demonstrate from the following familiar Syllogism.

In every Country where the Christian Religion is nationally profess'd, the Legislature have Power to establish by a Law a Publick Worship for the Service of God, and to appoint both Time and Place to assemble at, to perform the same; which shall bind the Consciences of all Denizens to obey the Injunctions laid on them by that Law, provided there be no Heterodoxy allow'd in the Expositions of the Holy Scriptures, nor Idolatry, nor Superstition, allow'd in the Publick Worship. But, on the contrary, if the Holy Scriptures are orthodoxally expounded, the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper regularly and constantly administer'd, its Worship in Substance either taken out of, or agreeable to,

the holy Scriptures, and Practice of the Primitive and purest Churches in all Ages from the Apostles down to this present Time; its Ceremonies few; its Manner of Performance decent and orderly, tending purely to God's Honour, and the Peoples Edification: Whatever Church is thus settled cannot justly be deny'd to be a true Part of Christ's Catholick Church.

But the Church of *England* is thus establish'd in Doctrine, in Sacraments, in Publick Worship; both in Substance, and Manner, and Ceremonies, purely tending to Decency and Order, promoting God's Glory, and the better Edification of its Members;

Therefore, whoever, being Native-Subjects, do, out of Pretence of better Edification from Preaching, or greater Purity in Prayer, withdraw themselves from their Duty of attending in the Parochial Churches, either the Preaching or the Publick Worship, and join themselves to separate Meetings, in Opposition to the establish'd Church, are justly to be deem'd *Schismatics*; for that if they have been Members of it, they rend and tear themselves from it; or if they have not, they contumaciously refuse to join themselves to it. And in either of these Senses, the Church of *England*, being not only a sound, but also the purest Part of Christ's Catholick Church, by thus dividing, they may justly be said to separate, not only from this Church, but also from the whole Church of Christ; and what the evil Consequence of that may be, I would to God they would seriously weigh. Nor can any Law, in my Opinion, tho' it may exempt them from the Penalty enjoind

in the Act for Conformity, free the Consciences of those that refuse to conform to the aforesaid National Establishment; but such assuredly render themselves obnoxious to the just Judgment of him, who is the God of Order, Love, and Unity, as being guilty of the Breach of this Triple Bond.

Now I take it for granted, that this is a sufficient Definition of *Schism*, viz. The separating from, or refusing to join with, so pure a Church as is this establish'd in this Land, by the Natives of it. And that *Schism* is in its own Nature very sinful, from the many evil Consequences resulting from it, will plainly appear from the Opinions and heavy Censures laid on Separatists by the most eminent Teachers among both *Presbyterians*, and others.

In Order to make this appear, Let us consider how the *Presbyterian* Church-Governours, after they had brought Episcopacy into Obscurity, behav'd themselves towards those that did not conform to their Establishment. And I am apt to presume, we shall find, upon Examination, their Notes strangely chang'd; for when the Church of *England* enjoy'd an entire Tranquillity, then, not to grant Liberty of Conscience to all, and in the most extensive Sense, was Persecution in the Superlative Degree. But when *John* *Presbyter* slid into the Saddle, then *Liberty of Conscience* was a Sin of the first Magnitude. How! Was Toleration, when the Church of *England* was uppermost, absolutely necessary to be granted to all for Conscience Sake? And when the *Presbyterians* had wickedly got the Domination, was it to be deny'd to all as an abominable Sin?

Sin? This cannot but be thought by all well-meaning People, that are Strangers to controversial Matters, to be a Paradox. But this is Matter of Fact, and I shall plainly evince the Truth of it, from the Sayings of several of the most Eminent of them, in their Sermons deliver'd to their then Governors.

I shall begin with Dr. *Cornelius Burgess*.

In his Sermon, Nov. 5, 1641, he told the *House of Commons*, That the Church was laid waste, and expos'd to Confusion, under the plausible Pretence of not forcing Mens Consciences: And that to put all Men into a Course of Order and Uniformity in God's Way, is not to force the Conscience, but to set up God in his due Place, and to bring all his People into Paths of Righteousness and Life.

And in his Sermon before the *Commons*, March the 30th, 1642, speaking of the Incurableness of Divisions, when once got to a Head, 'Do you not (says he) see or hear daily of the Disorders, Sects, Rents, and Schisms, that every where bud forth already, and threaten all Order, Unity, and Government. And he illustrates, by a familiar Simile, the dangerous Consequence of a dividing Temper; for (says he) give the Water but a Passage, without making up the Banks, and you know how soon whole Seas will break in upon us, and render all irrecoverable and incurable. If one Difficulty occur to Day, 'twill be doubled, yea, multiply'd to-morrow: There is no *Hydra* so fertile of Heads

as Error and Schism, grown to some Strength and Maturity; it will ask but a short Time of Connivence; afterwards there will be no curbing nor shaming of it. Nothing is so confident as Ignorance; impudent as Falshood; and catching as Error.

The famous Mr. Calamy, in a Sermon before the Commons, October 22, 1644, charges them home:

In case they are negligent in the Use of their Civil Power to prevent these growing Evils; (says he, with an Emphasis upon the Words, *you and your*) if *you* do not labour according to *your* Duty and Power to suppress the Errors and Heresies that are spread in the Kingdom, all these Errors are *your* Errors, and these Heresies are *your* Heresies; they are *your* Sins; and God calls for a Parliamentary Repentance from *you* for them this Day. *You* are the *Anabaptists*; *you* are the *Antinomians*; and 'tis *you* that hold, that all Religions are to be tolerated, &c. These are *your* Errors, if they spread by *your* Connivance; for the Sins of old *Eli's* Sons are imputed to *Eli* himself; and when the *Israelites* had prophan'd the Sabbath, *Nehemiah* told the Nobles of *Judah*, that it was they that did prophane it, because they suffer'd the People to prophane it, *Nehemiah* xiii. 17.

Mr.

Mr. *Mat. Newcomen*, in a Sermon before the Parliament, *Sept. 12, 1644*, hath these Words:

Nothing will satisfy some but a Toleration
 of all Religions, and all Opinions. Church-
 Government and Discipline is to some a Ficti-
 on, to others a Tyranny and Persecution. Ah
 Brethren! This is a Provocation, and will be
 a Provocation; for this God may turn us into
 the Wilderness again. And some Distance
 hence, he farther expresses himself after this
 Manner: We are come to downright Liberti-
 nism. There are two Opinions, which, if en-
 courag'd, will open a Door to *Turcism*, *Judaism*,
Atheism, *Polytheism*, any Monster of Opinion;
 The one is, that every Man is to be left to
 the Liberty of his own Religion, an Opinion,
 the most pernicious and destructive, as to the
 Souls of Men, so to the Common-weal of the
 Kingdom. That Liberty of believing what
 Men will, (or of holding what Faith they
 please) is no other than a Liberty of erring,
 and of erring in a Matter that concerns the
 eternal Salvation of the Soul; wherein to err,
 cannot but be most dangerous and destructive.
 Diversity of Religion disjoins and distracts the
 Minds of Men, and is the Seminary of perpetu-
 al Hatreds, Jealousies, Sedition, Wars, if any
 Thing in the World be; and, in a little Time,
 either a Schism in the State begets a Schism in
 the Church, or a Schism in the Church begets
 a Schism in the State; that is, either Religion
 and the Church is prejudic'd by Civil Conten-
 tions, or Church Controversies and Disputes
 about

‘ about Opinions break out into Civil Wars. Men
 ‘ will at last take up Swords and Spears instead
 ‘ of Pens, and defend by Arms what they can
 ‘ not do by Arguments.

And after telling them their Duty, which
 was, To preserve and reform Religion, and ex-
 tirpate Heresy and Schism, to do which they
 had covenanted with great Concernment, he
 lays before them the dismal Consequences of
 their Supineness in this most weighty Affair:
 Says he,

‘ If once we come to this, that any Man be
 ‘ suffer’d to teach what he pleaseth, to seduce
 ‘ whom he list, to be of what Faith or Religion
 ‘ seems good in his own Eyes; farewell, Cove-
 ‘ nant; farewell, Reform’d Religion; farewell
 ‘ the Peace and Glory of *England*, if that Day
 ‘ once come! — It is not usual, nay, it is not
 ‘ possible, that they which love God sincerely,
 ‘ should desire to cherish differing Religions:
 ‘ For it is most certain, he that admits contrary
 ‘ Religions, believes neither of them.

Dr. *William Good*, in a Sermon before the Com-
 mons, *March 26, 1645*, delivers himself thus:

‘ I doubt not, but your Souls abhor that bloo-
 ‘ dy Tenet to the Souls of Men, That it is the
 ‘ Duty of the Magistrate to tolerate all Religi-
 ‘ ons. What is it that shall be unlawful, if
 ‘ this be lawful, for every Man to make a Law
 ‘ and Religion for himself? — Such Allowance
 ‘ would prove destructive to Holiness, both per-
 ‘ sonal and domestical: *Omnis Religio & nulla*
 ‘ Religio,

Religio, A Toleration of all Religions would soon dwindle into no Religion, &c.

Dr. Burgess to the Commons, April 30, 1645,

Admonisheth them,

To beware of those Compliances with, and Indulgences to all sorts of Sects and Schisms, now pleaded for, both by Words and Writings; as if it were part of Christ's Legacy, and his People's Liberty, to be of what Religion they will, (he brings a weighty Text or two of Scripture, to shew that God himself will have Uniformity in Religion,) viz. I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, Jer. xxxii. 39. That is, That they may all call upon the Name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent, Zeph. iii. 9. (He goes on.) Did Christ ascend up on High, and give Gifts unto Men, and give some Apostles, and some Prophets, some Evangelists, and some Teachers, for the perfecting of the Saints, for the Work of the Ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ, 'till we all come into the Unity of the Faith? And is it Persecution, and Antichristianism, to engage all to Unity and Uniformity? Doth Paul bid the Philippians to beware of the concision? Phil. iii. 2. Doth he beseech the Romans, to mark those which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which they had receiv'd, and avoid them. And that upon this Ground, That they who are such, serve not the Lord Jesus, but their own bellies; however, by good words and fair speeches, they deceive the hearts of the simple? Rom. xvi. 17, 18.

Doth

Doth he, writing to the *Galatians*, wish, *I would they were cut off that trouble you?* Gal. v. 12. And, is it such an heinous Offence now, for the faithful Servants of Christ, to advise you to the same Course? O Heavens! Be astonish'd at this, and blush for the Ignorance of some, and Impudence of others, that dare so boldly press for such a Toleration, which none but vain, destructive Thoughts of Carnal Men, can look upon without Indignation and Horror.

Beware, (says he) how you hearken to those *Empyricks* and *Sirens*, who seek to charm the World into a deep Sleep, by presenting their Confidence of a Necessity of Compliance with all sorts of Sectaries; yea, of trusting the Sword in their Hands, for Fear of losing the Godly Party, (as too many proudly stile themselves, by way of Difference, from all that are not of their Opinions and Ways.) What is this, but to teach God a new Form of Politicks? To Proclaim, that it is not always safe, to hold out the Truth of the Gospel, and to command all Men to embrace it; but much safer to halt between two Opinions. Belike, King *Josiab* went beyond his Bounds, when, after himself had sworn a Solemn Covenant to the Lord, he made all *Judah* and *Benjamin* to stand to it; and made all that were present in *Israel*, to serve the Lord their God, 2 Chron. xxxiv, 32, 33. And *Asa* much more, when he drew all the People into a Covenant, That whosoever would not seek the Lord God of *Israel*, should be put to death, whether small or great, man or woman, 2 Chron. xv. 13. But the

the ample and transcendent Commendations, which the Lord gives unto these pious Kings, especially, in Reference to their Sincerity and Zeal of Reforming and Settling of Religion in one uniform Way, may sufficiently warrant and encourage all religious Magistrates to take Care, that all under their Government should serve the Lord with one Shoulder; this being not a Tyranny over Men, but the Privilege of the Gospel. Settle this in your Hearts: God's Truth, the Worship and Discipline of Christ, set up and establish'd in one uniform Way, never prejudic'd any Nation or State, (where it had free Passage,) in any the least Degree; but hath ever been their Safety, Happiness, and Honour. It is Error, (how much soever cry'd up,) not Truth, (how much soever cry'd down and blasphem'd,) that makes and foment's Factions and Rents.— Let People enjoy their just Privileges and Liberties, wherewith Christ hath made them free; not such Licentiousness, as is abus'd for a Cloak of Naughtiness.

In the Arguments of the *Scotish* Commissioners, Page 3 and 4, they press'd, in the first Place, 'Uniformity in Religion, as the only Means to preserve Peace, and to prevent many Divisions and Troubles: A Thing very becoming the King to promote, according to the Practice of the good Kings of *Judah*; and a Thing, which, they say, all sound Divines and Politicians are for.

Mr.

Mr. Calamy, January 14, 1648, in his Sermon
before the Lord Mayor, breaks out into this
Lamentation:

'The Churches of Christ lie desolate; Church-
'Reformation is obstructed; Church-Discipline
'is unsettled; and Church-Divisions increas'd.
'The famous City of London is become an
'Amsterdam; Separation from our Churches is
'countenanc'd; Toleration is cry'd up; Au-
'thority lieth asleep; Divisions, whether they
'be Ecclesiastical or Political, in Kingdoms,
'Cities, or Families, are infallible Causes of
'Ruin to them.

'Hereby the Hearts of People are mightily
'distracted; many are hinder'd from Conver-
'sion; and even the Godly themselves have
'lost much of the Power of Godliness in their
'Lives. I say, the Hearts of the People are
'mightily disturb'd, while one Minister preach-
'eth one Thing, as a Truth of the Gospel, and
'another Minister preacheth the quite contrary;
'with as much Confidence as the former.

'If Divisions be destructive to Kingdoms,
'Cities, and Families, this reproveth those that
'are the Authors and Fomenters of these Divi-
'sions, that are now among us. These are the
'Incendiaries of England. If he that sets one
'House on Fire, deserveth hanging; how much
'more they that set a whole Kingdom on Fire?
'If he that murders one Man must be put to
'Death; much more he that murders three
'Kingdoms? Mark them (saith the Apostle, Ro-
'mans xvi. 17.) that cause Divisions and Offences,
'contrary

contrary to the Doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them: Avoid them as the greatest Enemies to England. These are like the Salamander, that cannot live but in the Fire of Contention: These are of a Jesuitical Spirit; and no doubt, the Heads and Hands of the Jesuits are in all our Divisions.

He goes on, and makes an horrible Outcry against those that plead for an unlimited Toleration of all Religions; and earnestly prays God, to keep them from being poyson'd with such an Error. For (says he) *It will divide a Kingdom against it self*; it will rend it in a thousand Pieces: It is a Doctrine that overthroweth all Church-Government; bringeth in Confusion, and openeth a wide Door unto all Irreligion and Atheism. For at the same Door that all false Religions come in, the true Religion will quickly get out. And if it be as good for a Man to live where nothing is Lawful, as where all Things are Lawful, surely 'tis every Way as uncomfortable, to Live where there are all Religions, as where there is no Religion at all.

He continues inveighing against the pernicious Consequences of allowing any Toleration; and prompts the Magistrates to use that Power that God hath given them, in suppressing these Differences in Religion, as far as they were able; that they might not be accounted accessary to them, by their supine Neglect in this the Cause of God. For (says he) *you are the ministers of God for good: and revengers to execute wrath upon them that do evil, Rom. xiii. 4. and God hath deputed you, for the punishment of*
evil

'evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well;
 1 Pet. ii. 14. Afterwards (says he) doth not
 God prophesy, *Isa. xlix. 23. That kings shall be*
 'our nursing fathers, and queens our nursing mothers?
 And how can a Christian Magistrate discharge
 that Duty as he ought, if he hath not Power
 from God, to punish those that would poison
 the Souls of his weak Children with Heresies,
 (as he accounted all Toleration to be) and
 Soul-destroying Opinions? (He proceeds with
 branding Separation, with almost all the Ig-
 nominies that Tongue can express,) such as
 infecting the People with Soul-destroying Er-
 rors; Grace-destroying Opinions; undoing the
 Souls of the Subjects; the Plague of Heresy
 upon the Soul, &c. and in his Conclusion of
 this Topick, he queries, Shall not the chief
 Magistrate of a Kingdom have Power to put
 out of his Kingdom, (at least shut up from do-
 ing hurt,) one that is his Subject, and polluted
 with blasphemous, heretical, idololatrical Opi-
 nions? Is not the Kingdom the Magistrate's
 House and Family? This celebrated Gentle-
 man adds much more to the same Purpose.

One Thing, I must confess, seems to me to
 be very odd; that he that had so lately promp-
 ted the pulling down the Church of *England*,
 and destroying Regal Government, should now
 make use of *Isaiab's* Prophecy, *That kings should*
 'be our nursing fathers, and queens our nursing mo-
 'thers; to induce the People to Obedience to the
 Government then in being, and the Magistrates
 to execute Laws that were made diametrically
 opposite to Kingly Government. Sure he might

have found out a Text of Scripture less reflecting upon the then Establishment; and no Doubt, would, if he had not lain under a violent Transport of Passion, in regard to the intolerable Sin of Countenancing Separation: But whither is it some Men's Zeal will not carry them, in the most erroneous Opinions, even to the making the most impertinent Scriptural Quotations?

Now let us understand, what the self-denying Mr. *Richard Baxter* says, in his Epistle, to separate Congregations, viz.

‘ From Diversity in Opinion, and external
 ‘ Rites, resulteth Dislike: Thence Enmity,
 ‘ thence Opposition, thence Schism in Church,
 ‘ and Sedition in State; the State not standing
 ‘ secure without the Church, nor the Church
 ‘ without Unity, nor Unity without Uniformi-
 ‘ ty.

‘ Consider this: ’Tis the Judgment of some,
 ‘ that Thousands are gone to Hell, and ten
 ‘ Thousands upon their March thither; that in
 ‘ all Probability, had never come there, if they
 ‘ had not been tempted from the Parish Churches,
 ‘ for the Enjoyment of Communion in a
 ‘ purer Church.

Very fine, Master *Baxter*! Can you damn Thousands and ten Thousands, some already gone, and others in the high Road to Hell, for separating from your Usurpation, under the Pretext of greater Purity in Preaching and Prayer; and could you refuse to join yourself to the Episcopal Church of *England*, when in its flourishing

rishing Estate, from the same Plea? Can you be angry with those, that are guilty of the same Sin with your self?

Our reverend Mr. *Baxter*, saith, in his holy Common-Wealth, Addit. to Pref. Prop. 6. speaking of Civil Government.

‘ *Moses* had to do in Matters of Religion as a
 ‘ Magistrate; and so had the ruling Elders that
 ‘ assisted him; and so had the Kings of *Israel*
 ‘ and *Judah*, as it is well known; insomuch,
 ‘ that in *Asa’s* Days, they covenanted to put
 ‘ him to Death, that would not seek the Lord
 ‘ God of *Israel*. Law and Providence are quite
 ‘ chang’d, if Toleration of false Worship, and
 ‘ other Abuses of Religion, tend not to the Ruin
 ‘ of the Common-Wealth.

Here it may be observ’d, that he charges all
 Worship, that was contrary to the Scheme then
 establish’d, to be false, and tending to the Ruin
 of the Common Wealth, and Destruction of the
 Church, and Mens Souls; and he calls the
 Prompting the Magistrates not to meddle with
 Matters of Faith and Worship, but leaving
 those Things to Christ above, to be the setting
 up Popery in *England*. All which plainly shows
 his Abhorrence of Separation; and is a clear In-
 dication, that had he liv’d in the Days of the
 last Grant of Toleration, at the Beginning of
 the Reign of the late King *William*, and his
 Scheme of Religion had been establish’d; he would
 (as we vulgarly express it) Tooth and Nail have
 opposed the granting the same; and I doubt not

but such powerful Men as he, would have sway'd the Legislature.

Mr. Baxter, in Opposition to Mr. Ainsworth's palliating the Sin of Schism, expresseth himself, with relation to the Mischief of Divisions, thus,

Says he, ' I look not upon them as petty Inconveniences, little Troubles to the Churches, the Effects of Levity, and Volubility of Mens Minds; (Cure of Divisions.) But (in Defence of his Cure, Pag. 3.) That the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, are the Causes from whence they come: That they are as much the Works of the Flesh, as Adulteries, Fornications, &c. (*Christian Directory*, Pag. 739.) That Contentious Dividers are carnal Men, and have not the Spirit: That Divisions are the Wounding, nay, the Killing of the Church, as much as lieth in the Dividers; and that to reform the Church, by dividing it, is no wiser, than to cut out the Liver, or Spleen, or Gall, to cleanse them from the Filth, that both obstruct them, and hinder them in their Office. That Divisions are the Deformities of the Church, the Lamentations of Friends, and the Scorn of Enemies: The Dishonour of Christ and the Gospel: The great Hindrance of the Conversion, and Salvation of the World, and of the Edification of the Members of the Church. That they fill the Church with Sins of a most odious Nature: They cherish Pride, and Malice, and belying others, (the three great Sins of the Devil) as natural-
ly

ly as dead Flesh breedeth Worms. In a Word,
 the Scripture telleth us, That *where Envy-
 and Strife is, there is Confusion, and every evil
 Work*; (and is not this a lamentable Way
 of Reformation of some imaginary, or lesser
 Evil?) They are uneasy to the Persons
 themselves, and rob them of the sweetest Part
 of Religion: They lead directly to Apostacy
 from the Faith; and shake States and King-
 doms, having a lamentable Influence on the
 Civil Peace. And, in Pag. 741. Schism is a
 Sin against so many, and clear, and vehement
 Words of the Holy Ghost, that 'tis utterly
 without Excuse; Whoredoms, Treason, and
 Perjury, are not oftner forbidden in the Gos-
 pel, than this: That it is contrary to the very
 Design of Christ in our Redemption; which
 was, to reconcile us to God, and to unite and
 centre us all in him: That it is contrary to
 the Design of the Spirit of Grace, and to the
 very Nature of Christianity it self: That it is a
 Sin against the nearest Bonds of our highest
 Relations to each other: That it is either a
 Dividing Christ, or robbing him of a great Part
 of his Inheritance; and neither of these is a
 little Sin. That it is accompanied with Self-
 Ignorance, and Pride, and great Unthankful-
 ness to God: That Church-Divers are the
 most successful Servants of the Devil, being
 Enemies to Christ, in his Family and Livery;
 and, that they serve the Devil more effectual-
 ly than open Enemies. That *Schism* is a Sin,
 which contradicteth all God's Ordinances, and
 Means of Grace, which are purposely to pro-
 cure and maintain the Unity of his Church.

' That 'tis a Sin against as great and lamentable
 ' Experiences, as almost any Sin can be: And
 ' this is a heinous Aggravation of it, that it is
 ' commonly justify'd, and not repented of by
 ' those that commit it; and it is yet the more
 ' heinous, that it is commonly father'd upon
 ' God. Lastly, That it is most unlike the Hea-
 ' venly State, and, in some Regard, worse than
 ' the Kingdom of the Devil; for he would not
 ' destroy it, by *dividing it against it self*. Re-
 ' member now, saith he, that *Schism*, and ma-
 ' king Parties and Divisions in the Church, is
 ' not so small a Sin, as many take it for. And,
 ' upon *Bagshaw's* lessening the Sin of Separation,
 ' he admonishes him after this Manner; Alas,
 ' dear Brother, That after so many Years Si-
 ' lencing and Affliction; after Flames and
 ' Plagues, and dreadful Judgments; after twen-
 ' ty Years Practice of the Sin it self; and when
 ' we are buried in the Ruins which it caused;
 ' we should not yet know, that our own uncha-
 ' ritable Divisions, Alienations, and Separations,
 ' are a crying Sin! Yea, *The* crying Sin; as
 ' well as the Uncharitableness, and Hurtfulness
 ' of others. Alas! Will God leave us also, even
 ' us, to the Obdurateness of *Pharaoh*? Doth not
 ' Judgment begin with us? What have we done
 ' to Christ's Kingdom; to this Kingdom; to our
 ' Friends (dead and alive;) to our selves, and,
 ' alas, to our Enemies, by our Divisions! And,
 ' do we not feel it? Do we not know it? Is it to
 ' us, even to us, a Crime intolerable, to call
 ' us to Repentance? Woe to us! Into what
 ' Hard-heartedness have we sinned our selves?
 ' Yea, that we should continue, and passionate-
 ' ly

ly defend it! When will God give us Repen-
tance unto Life?

One would have thought, morally speaking, that 'twas impossible to have accumulated so many tremendous Aggravations of the Sin of *Schism*, as our great *Mr. Baxter* has here enumerated: But when I consider he had been so lately himself an Offender herein, I must confess, that Wondering hereat may in some measure vanish; and that his charging so deplorably the Offenders of those Times in this Respect, might strike his own guilty Soul with Horror, for his late Opposing the establish'd Church. But if he, at the same Time that he charg'd others, lay under no Relentings; we may well judge of him, (to speak in his own Words, to his Brother *Bagshaw*, in the last Paragraph,) that he was arriv'd to *Pharaoh's* Obdurateness. Thus far our reverend *Mr. Baxter*.

Mr. Case, in a Sermon before the Commons,
May 26, 1647, expresses himself thus.

' Liberty of Conscience, falsely so call'd, may,
' in good Time, improve it self into Liberty
' of Estates, Liberty of Houses, and Liberty
' of Wives; and, in a Word, Liberty of Perdi-
' tion of Souls and Bodies. (And a little after
' he admonisheth them) That they must be a
' Terror to evil doers, unless they mean to bear
' the Sword in vain. For, says he, if you
' will, God will not; and if God take the Sword
' into his Hand once, he will smite to Purpose,
' and execute Vengeance throughly, both up-
C 4 on

on the evil doers, and upon you that have not been a Terror to them. Oh ! therefore, up and be doing, that you may deliver the Kingdom out of the Hand of the Lord, for it is a fearful thing to fall into the Hands of the Living God. O let not your Patience be interpreted a Connivence, and your Connivence be taken for a Toleration ; it may be the Kingdom's Ruin, but it will be your Sin.

This worthy Divine, not being able to bear the granting Indulgence to any, how strenuously does he prompt the Government, to take the Sword into their Hands, and exercise it upon such wicked and bold Men, as dare to ask for a Toleration, by menacing them with God's Judgment, in case they refuse so to do !

Let us now look a little into the Debates between the Divines of the Assembly, and the Independents. The former charge the latter with *Schism*, for these two Things.

* *First*, For refusing Communion with those Churches, which they confess'd to be true Churches. For, say the Members of the Assembly, Thus to depart from true Churches, is not to hold Communion with them as such, but rather by departing, to declare them not to be such.

Secondly,

* Still, *Unreas. of Separat.*

Secondly, For setting up different Congregations, where they confess'd there was an Agreement in Doctrine.

The Desire of the Independents, as it was propos'd by themselves, at the Committee for Accommodation, *December 4, 1645*, was this,

' That they may not be forc'd to Communi-
' cate as Members, in those Parishes where
' they dwell; but may have Liberty to have
' Congregations of such Persons, who give good
' Testimonies of their Godliness, and yet out
' of Tendernefs of Conscience, cannot Commu-
' nicate in their Parishes, but do voluntarily
' offer themselves to joyn in such Congregati-
' on.

To which the Divines of the Assembly an-
swer'd, *December 15*.

' This Desire is not to be granted them, for
' these Reasons.

' *First*, Because it holds out a plain and total
' Separation from the Rule; as if in nothing it
' were to be comply'd with, nor our Churches
' to be communicated with in any Thing, which
' should argue Church-Communion. More could
' not be said, or done against false Churches.

Secondly, ' It plainly holds out, The Law-
' fulness of gathering Churches out of true
' Churches, yea, out of such true Churches,
' which are endeavouring farther to Reform,
' according to the Word of God; whereof we
' are

‘ are assur’d, there is not the least Hint of any
 ‘ Example, in all the Book of God.

‘ *Thirdly*, ‘ This would give Countenance to a
 ‘ perpetual *Schism and Division* in the Church,
 ‘ still drawing some from the Rule, which also
 ‘ would breed many Irritations among the Par-
 ‘ ties going away, and those whom they leave :
 ‘ And again, between the Church that should
 ‘ be forsaken, and that to which they should
 ‘ go.

December 23, The Dissenting Brethren put in
 their Reply to these Reasons.

To the first Reason they say,

‘ (1.) That gathering into other Congregati-
 ‘ ons such, who cannot, out of Tenderneſs of Con-
 ‘ ſcience, partake as Members in their Churches,
 ‘ for the purer Enjoyment (as to their Conſci-
 ‘ ences) of all Ordinances, yet ſtill maintain-
 ‘ ing Communion with them as Churches, is
 ‘ far from Separation, much leſs a plain and
 ‘ total Separation. And this is not ſetting up
 ‘ Churches againſt Churches, but Neighbour-
 ‘ Sifter-Churches, of a different Judgment. For,
 ‘ ſay they, if the pureſt Churches in the World,
 ‘ (unto our Judgment in all other reſpects)
 ‘ ſhould impoſe, as a Condition of receiving the
 ‘ Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, any one Thing,
 ‘ that ſuch tender Conſcience cannot join in,
 ‘ (as ſuppoſe Kneeling in the Act of Receiving,
 ‘ which was the Caſe of *Scotland* and *England*.)
 ‘ if they remove from theſe Churches, and,
 ‘ have Liberty from a State to gather into o-
 ‘ ther

‘ther Churches, to enjoy this and other Ordinances, this is no Separation.

(2.) ‘That it is not a plain and total Separation from the Rule, unless they wholly in all Things differ, by setting up altogether different Rules of Constitution, Worship and Government; but they shall practice the most of the same Things; and these the most Substantial, which are found in the Rule it self.

(3.) ‘That they would maintain Occasional Communion with their Churches, not only in Hearing and Preaching, but occasionally in Baptizing their Children in their Churches, and Receiving the Lord’s Supper there, &c.

And, would not all this clear them from the Imputation of *Schism*? Not agreeing in the main Things? Not owning their Churches to be True? Not maintaining Occasional Communion with them? Let’s hear what the Divines of the Assembly think of all this.

Thus they Answer,

(1.) ‘That although Tendernefs of Conscience may bind Men to forbear, or suspend the Act of Communion in that Particular, wherein Men conceive they cannot hold Communion without Sin; yet it doth not bind to follow such a positive Prescript, as possibly may be divers from the Will and Council of God, of which Kind, we conceive, this of gathering separate Churches, out of true Churches, to be one.

(2.) ‘It is one thing to remove to a Congregation which is under the same Rule: In the former

‘ former Case, a Man retains his Membership;
 ‘ in the latter, he renounceth his Membership,
 ‘ upon difference of Judgment, touching the very
 ‘ Constitution of the Churches, from, and unto
 ‘ which he removes.

(3.) ‘ If a Church do require that which is
 ‘ Evil of any Member, he must forbear to do
 ‘ it, yet without Separation. They who thought
 ‘ Kneeling, in the Act of Communion, to be un-
 ‘ lawful, either in *England*, or *Scotland*, did not
 ‘ separate, or renounce Membership; but did
 ‘ some of them, with Zeal and Learning, de-
 ‘ fend our Church, against those of the Sepa-
 ‘ ration.

(4.) ‘ The Notion of Separation, is not to be
 ‘ measur’d by Civil Acts of State, but by the
 ‘ Word of God.

(5.) ‘ To leave all ordinary Communion in
 ‘ any Church, with dislike, when Opposition
 ‘ or Offence offers it self, is to separate from
 ‘ such a Church, in the Scripture Sense.

(6.) ‘ A total Difference from Churches, is
 ‘ not necessary to make a total Separation; for
 ‘ the most rigid Separatists, hold the same Rule
 ‘ of Worship and Government with our Bre-
 ‘ thren: And under this Pretence, *Novatians*,
 ‘ *Donatists*, all that ever were thought to sepa-
 ‘ rate, might shelter themselves.

(7.) If they may occasionally exercise these
 ‘ Acts of Communion with us once, a second,
 ‘ or third Time, without Sin; we know no
 ‘ Reason, why it may not be Ordinary without
 ‘ Sin; and then Separation and Church-gather-
 ‘ ing would have been needless. To separate
 ‘ from those Churches ordinarily and visibly,
 ‘ with

‘ with whom occasionally you may joyn with-
 ‘ out Sin, seemeth to be a most unjust Separation.
 ‘ tion.

To the second Reason, the Dissenting Brethren gave these Answers.

(1.) ‘ That it was founded upon this Supposition, That nothing is to be Tolerated, which
 ‘ is unlawful in the Judgment of those who are
 ‘ to Tolerate : Which the Divines of the Assembly deny’d, and said, It was upon the
 ‘ Supposition of the unlawfulness to Tolerate
 ‘ gathering of Churches out of true Churches ;
 ‘ which they do not once endeavour to prove
 ‘ Lawful.

(2.) ‘ That if after all Endeavours, Men’s
 ‘ Consciences are unsatisfy’d, as to Communion
 ‘ with a Church ; they have no Obligation lying upon them to continue in that Communion ; or on the Churches, to withhold them
 ‘ from removing to Purer Churches ; or if there
 ‘ be none such, to gather into Churches.

To which the Divines of the Assembly reply’d,

First, ‘ That this open’d a Gap for all Sects to
 ‘ challenge such a Liberty as their due.

Secondly, ‘ This Liberty was deny’d by the
 ‘ Churches of *New-England* ; and they have as
 ‘ just Ground to deny it as they.

To

To the third Reason they answer'd,

(1.) ' That the Abuse of the Word *Schism*,
' hath done much Hurt in the Churches ; That
' the Signification of it, was not yet agreed
' upon by the State, nor debated by the As-
' sembly.

To which the others reply,

' That if the Word *Schism* had been left out,
' the Reason would have remain'd strong, viz.
' That this would give Countenance to perpe-
' tual Division in the Church, still drawing
' away Churches from under the Rule. And to
' give Countenance to an unjust and causeless
' Separation, from Lawful Church-Communion,
' is not far from giving Countenance to a *Schism* ;
' especially when the Grounds, upon which this
' Separation is desir'd, are such, upon which all
' other possible Scruples, which erring Consci-
' ences may, in any other Case, be subject un-
' to, may claim the Privilege of a like Indul-
' gence : And, so this Toleration being the first,
' shall, indeed, but lay the Foundation, and o-
' pen the Gap, whereat as many Divisions in
' the Church, as there may be Scruples in the
' Minds of Men, shall, upon the self-same Equity,
' be let in.

(2.) ' This will give Countenance only to Godly
' People's joining in other Congregations, for
' their greater Edification, who cannot otherwise,
' without Sin, enjoy all the Ordinances of Christ ;
' yet so, as not condemning those Churches they
' joyn

joyn not with, as false; but still preserving all Christian Communion with the Saints, as Members of the Body of Christ, of the Church Catholick; and joyn also with them, in all Duties of Worship, which belong to particular Churches, so far as they are able: And if this be call'd *Schism*, or Countenance of *Schism*, it is more than we have yet learn'd from Scriptures, or any approv'd Authors.

To this, the Divines of the Assembly
reply'd.

First, This desired Forbearance, is a perpetual Division in the Church, and a perpetual drawing away from the Churches under the Rule: For, upon the same Pretence, those who scruple Infant-Baptism, may withdraw from their Churches, and so separate into another Congregation; and so in that, some Practice may be scrupled, and they separate again. Are these Divisions and Sub-Divisions, say they, as lawful as they may be infinite? Or, must we give that Respect to the Errors of Mens Consciences, as to satisfy their Scruples, by Allowance of this Liberty to them? And, doth it not plainly signify, that Error of Conscience is a Protection against *Schism*.

Secondly, The not Condemning our Churches as false, doth little extenuate the Separation: For divers of the *Brownists*, who have totally separated in former Times, have not condemned these Churches as false; tho' they do not pronounce an affirmative Judgment against us, yet

yet the very Separating is a tacit and practical
 Condemning of our Churches, if not as false,
 yet as impure, *enſq;* as that in ſuch Admini-
 ſtrations, they cannot be by them, as Mem-
 bers, communicated with, without Sin : And
 when they ſpeak of Communion with us, as
 Members of the Church Catholick, it is as
 full a declining of Communion with us as
 Churches, as if we were false Churches.

Thirdly, We do not think Differences in
 Judgment in this or that Point, to be *Schiſm* ;
 or that every Inconformity unto every Thing
 uſed or enjoined, is *Schiſm* ; ſo that Commu-
 nion be preſerved, or that Separation from
 Idolatrous Communion or Worſhip, *ex ſe* un-
 lawful, is *Schiſm* : But to join in ſeparate Con-
 gregations of another Communion ; which
 Seceſſion of our Members is a manifeſt Rup-
 ture of our Societies into others ; and is there-
 fore a *Schiſm* in the Body : And if the Apoſtle
 do call thoſe Diviſions of the Church, where-
 in Chriſtians did not ſeparate into divers for-
 med Congregations, of ſeveral Communions
 in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, *Schiſms* ;
 much more may ſuch Separation as this deſired,
 be ſo called.

Fourthly, Scruple of Conſcience is no Cauſe of
 Separating ; nor doth it take off cauſeleſs Se-
 paration from being *Schiſm*, which may ariſe
 from Errors of Conſcience, as well as carnal
 and Corrupt Reaſons : Therefore we conceive,
 the Cauſes of Separation muſt be ſhewn to be
 ſuch *ex naturâ rei*, as will bear it out ; and
 therefore

, therefore we say, that the granting the Liberty desir'd, will give Countenance to Schism.

Fifthly, ' We cannot but take it for granted, ' upon Evidence of Reason, and Experience of ' all Ages, That this Separation will be the ' Mother and Nurse of Contentions, Strifes, ' Envyings, Confusions, and so draw with it ' that Breach of Love, which may endanger ' the heightning of it into formal *Schism*, even ' in the Sense of our Brethren.

' *Sixthly*, ' What is it that approv'd Authors ' do call *Schism*, but the breaking off Members ' from their Churches, which are lawfully constituted Churches, and from Communion in ' Ordinances, &c. without just and sufficient ' Cause, *ex natura rei*, to justify such Secession, ' and to joyn in other Congregations of separate ' Communion, either because of Personal Failings in the Officers, or Members of ' the Congregation from which they separate; ' or because of causeless Scruple of their own ' Conscience, which hath been call'd setting ' up *Altare contra Altare*; for which they quote ' St. *Augustin*, *Cameron*.

This being the true State of the Controversy about Separation in the late Times, between the *Presbyterians*, when they had the Ascendent both in Church and State; and the *Independents*, &c. who sued for Liberty of Conscience, but could not upon any Terms obtain it: Let us now observe, what that Right Reverend, high Learned, and truly Judicious Prelate,

late, Dr. *Stillington* faith, with Relation to this Controversy, who, after he had undeniably prov'd, that not only the old Nonconformist, but also that the late Assembly of Divines, have strenuously condemn'd those of the Separation, for dividing from the Establish'd Church, upon such Trifles for which they contended. We will take it in his own Words, which consist of five Particulars, viz.

First, ' That the old Nonconformists did think themselves bound in Conscience to communicate with the Church of *England*; and did look upon Separation from it to be Sin, notwithstanding the Corruptions they supposed to be in it. This I have prov'd with so great Evidence, in the foregoing Discourse; (in his Book of the *Unreasonableness of Separation*, Page 73, that those who deny it, may, with the Help of the same Metaphysicks, deny, That the Sun shines.

Secondly, ' That all Men were bound in Conscience, towards preserving the Union of the Church, to go as far as they were able. This was not only asserted by the Nonconformists, but by the most rigid Separatists of former Times, and by the Dissenting Brethren themselves. So that the Lawfulness of Separation, where Communion is Lawful, and thought so to be by the Persons who separate, is one of the newest Inventions of this Age: But what new Reasons they have for

it, besides Noise and Clamour, I am yet to seek.

Thirdly, 'That bare Scruple of Conscience, doth not justify Separation, although it may excuse Non-communion in the Particulars which are scrupled; provided, that they have used the best Means for a right Information.

Fourthly, 'That where Occasional Communion is Lawful, constant Communion is a Duty. Which follows from the Divines of the Assembly, blaming the Dissenting Brethren, for allowing the Lawfulness of Occasional Communion with our Churches, and yet forbearing ordinary Communion with them. For (say they) to separate from those Churches ordinarily and visibly, with whom occasionally you may joyn, seemeth to be a most unjust Separation.

Fifthly, 'That withdrawing from the Communion of a true Church, and setting up Congregations for purer Worship, or under another Rule, is plain and downright Separation; as is most evident from the Answer of the Divines of the Assembly, to the Dissenting Brethren. Thus far that great Man.

I shall add hereto, the *London Minister's Letter*, presented the first of *January*, 1645, to the Assembly of Divines, Sitting at *Westminster*, by Authority of Parliament, against Tolerati-

on; the which I shall give you at length, directed as follows.

To our Reverend, Learned, and Religious Brethren, the PROLOCUTOR, and the rest of the DIVINES Assembled, and now Sitting at Westminster, by Authority of PARLIAMENT, these Present.

Reverend and Beloved Brethren,

WE are exceedingly apprehensive of the Desirableness of the Churches Peace, and of the Pleasantness of Brethren's Unity, knowing, that when Peace is set upon its proper Basis, viz. Righteousness and Truth, it is one of the best Possessions, both delectable and profitable; like *Aaron's Ointment, and the Dew of Hermon*. It is true, by Reason of different Lights, and different Sightings among Brethren, there may be dissenting in Opinion; yet, why should there be any separating from Church-Communion? The Church's Coat may be of divers Colours; yet, why should there be any Rent in it? Have we not a Touchstone of Truth, the Word of God? And when all Things are examin'd by this Word, then that which is best may be held fast; but first they must be known, and then examin'd afterwards. If our Dissenting Brethren, after so many importunate Intreaties, would have been perswaded (either in Zeal to the Truth, or in sincere Love to the Church's Peace and Unity among Brethren, or in Respect to their own Reputation, by

' fair and ingenuous Dealing, or in Conscience
 ' to their Promise, made to the Ministers of
 ' London, now five Years since, or any such
 ' like reasonable Consideration) at last, to have
 ' given us a full Narrative of their Opinions,
 ' and Grounds of their Separation; we are per-
 ' swaded, they would not have stood at such
 ' a Distance from us, as now they do: But
 ' they choose rather to walk by their own
 ' private Lights, than to unbosom themselves
 ' to us, their most affectionate Brethren; and
 ' to set themselves in an untrodden way of
 ' their own, rather than to wait what our
 ' Covenanted Reformation, according to the
 ' Word of God, and Examples of the best Re-
 ' form'd Churches, would bring forth. But the
 ' Offence doth not end here; it is much that
 ' our Brethren should separate from the Church;
 ' but that they should endeavour to get a
 ' Warrant to authorize their Separation from
 ' it, and to have Liberty (by drawing Mem-
 ' bers out of it) to weaken and diminish it,
 ' till (so far as lies in them) they have brought
 ' it to nothing; this we think to be plainly
 ' unlawful; yet this, we understand, is their
 ' present Design and Endeavour. Wherefore

' (*Reverend Brethren,*) having had such large
 ' Experience of your Zeal of God's Glory,
 ' your Care of his afflicted Church, your ear-
 ' nest Endeavours to promote the compleat Re-
 ' formation of it, and of your ready Concur-
 ' rence, with us, in the Improvement of any
 ' Means, that might be found conducive to
 ' this End; we are bold to hint unto you,

these our ensuing Reasons, against the Toleration of Independency in this Church.

First. The Desires and Endeavours of Independency for a Toleration, are, at this Time, extremely unseasonable and preposterous: For,

(1.) The Reformation of Religion is not yet perfected and settled among us, according to our Covenant. And why may not the Reformation be raised up, at last, to such Purity and Perfection, that truly tender Consciences may receive abundant Satisfaction, for ought that yet appears?

(2.) It is not yet known, what the Government of the *Independents* is; neither would they ever yet vouchsafe to let the World know what they hold in that Point, tho' some of their Party have been too forward to challenge the *London* Petitioners, as led with blind Obedience, and pinning their Souls upon the Priests Sleeves, for desiring an Establishment of the Government of Christ, before there was any Model of it extant.

(3.) We can hardly be persuaded, that the *Independents* themselves (after all the Stirs they have made amongst us) are, as yet, fully resolv'd about their own Way, wherewith they would be concluded; seeing they publish not their Model, (tho' they are nimble enough in publishing other Things) and they profess Reserves, and new Lights, for which they will
(no

‘ (no Doubt) expect the like Toleration, and so
 ‘ in *infinitum*. It were more seasonable to sue
 ‘ for Toleration, when once they are positively
 ‘ determin’d how far they mean to go, and
 ‘ where they mean to stay.

Secondly. Their Desires and Endeavours are
 unreasonable and unequal in divers Re-
 gards.

(1.) ‘ Partly, because no such Toleration hath
 ‘ hitherto been establish’d (as far as we know)
 ‘ in any Christian State by the Civil Magi-
 ‘ strate.

(2.) ‘ Partly, because some of them have so-
 ‘ lemnly profess’d that they cannot suffer *Pres-*
 ‘ bytery: And answerable hereunto is their Pra-
 ‘ ctice, in those Places where Independency pre-
 ‘ vails.

(3.) ‘ And partly, because to grant to them,
 ‘ and not to other Sectaries, who are free-born
 ‘ as well as they, and have done as good Service
 ‘ as they to the Publick, (as they us’d to plead)
 ‘ will be counted Injustice and great Partiality;
 ‘ but to grant it unto all, will scarce be clear’d
 ‘ from great Impiety.

Thirdly. Independency is a *Schism*: For,

(1.) ‘ *Independents* do depart from our Churches,
 ‘ being true Churches, and so acknowledg’d by
 ‘ themselves.

(2.) ' They draw and seduce our Members
' from our Congregations.

(3.) ' They erect separate Congregations, un-
' der a separate and undiscover'd Government.

(4.) ' They refuse Communion with our
' Churches in the Sacraments.

(5.) ' Their Ministers refuse to preach among
' us as Officers.

(6.) ' Their Members, if at any time they join
' with us, in hearing the Word and Prayer, yet
' they do it not as with the ministerial Word and
' Prayer, nor as Acts of Church-Communion.

' Now we judge that no *Schism* is to be tole-
' rated in the Church; * *ἡσυχία*, 1 Cor. i. 10.
' 1 Cor. xii. 25. † *διχομασίας*, Rom. vi. 17. with
' 1 Cor. iii. 3. Gal. v. 20.

Fourthly. ' Many Mischiefs will inevitably fol-
' low upon this Toleration, and that both
' to Church and Commonwealth.

I. ' To the Church; as,

(1.) Causeless and unjust Revolts from our Mi-
' nistry and Congregations.

(2.) ' Our Peoples Minds will be troubled, and
' in Danger to be subverted, as *Acts* xv. 24.

(3.) Bit-

* *Sc hisms.* † *Divisions.*

(3.) ' Bitter Heart-burnings, among Brethren,
' will be fomented and perpetuated to Posterity.

(4.) ' The Godly, Painful, and Orthodox Mi-
' nistry will be discourag'd and despis'd.

(5.) ' The Life and Power of Godliness will be
' eaten out by frivolous Disputes and vain Jang-
' lings.

(6.) ' The whole Course of Religion, in pri-
' vate Families, will be interrupted and under-
' min'd.

(7.) ' Reciprocal Duties between Persons of
' nearest and dearest Relations will be extream-
' ly violated.

(8.) ' The whole Work of Reformation, espec-
' ially in Discipline and Government, will be
' retarded, disturb'd, and in Danger of being
' made utterly frustrate and void, whilst every
' Person shall have Liberty, upon every trivial
' Discontent at *Presbyterial* Government and
' Churches, to revolt from us, and list themselves
' in separate Congregations.

(9.) ' All other Sects and Heresies in the King-
' dom, will be encourag'd to endeavour the
' like Toleration.

(10.) ' All other Sects and Heresies in the
' Kingdoms will safeguard and shelter themselves
' under the Wings of *Independency*: And some
' of

‘ of the *Independents*, in their Books, have openly
 ‘ avow’d, that they plead for Liberty of Con-
 ‘ science, as well for others as themselves.

(11.) ‘ And the whole Church of *England*, in
 ‘ short time, will be swallow’d up with Distrac-
 ‘ tion and Confusion. And God is not the *Author*
 ‘ of Confusion, but of Peace, 1 Cor. 14. 33.

II. To the Commonwealth; for,

(1.) ‘ All these Mischiefs in the Church will
 ‘ have their proportionable Influence upon the
 ‘ Commonwealth.

(2.) ‘ The Kingdom will be wofully distracted
 ‘ by Scandal and Divisions; so that the Enemies
 ‘ of it, both Domestical and Foreign, will be
 ‘ encourag’d to plot and practice against it.

(3.) ‘ It is much to be doubted, lest the Power
 ‘ of the Magistrate should not only be weaken’d,
 ‘ but even utterly overthrown, considering the
 ‘ Principles and Practices of *Independents*, toge-
 ‘ ther with their Compliance with other Secta-
 ‘ ries, sufficiently known to be Anti-Magistra-
 ‘ tical.

Fifthly. ‘ Such a Toleration is utterly repugnant
 ‘ and inconsistent with that solemn League
 ‘ and Covenant, for Reformation and De-
 ‘ fence of Religion, which not only both
 ‘ Houses of Parliament, but also Persons of
 ‘ all Sorts, in both Kingdoms of *England* and
 ‘ *Scotland*, have Subscrib’d, and with Hands
 lifted

‘ lifted up to the most High God, have Sworn:
 ‘ Which Covenant, likewise, both you, and
 ‘ we, and those that most earnestly pursue
 ‘ the Establishment of this Toleration, have
 ‘ made, (or should have made) in the Pre-
 ‘ sence of Almighty God, the Searcher of
 ‘ all Hearts, with a true Intention to per-
 ‘ form the same, as we shall answer at that
 ‘ great Day, when the Secrets of all Hearts
 ‘ shall be disclos’d: For,

(1.) ‘ This is opposite to the Reformation of
 ‘ Religion, according to the Word of God, and
 ‘ the Examples of the best Reform’d Churches.

Art. I.

(2.) ‘ It is destructive to the three Kingdoms
 ‘ nearest Conjunction and Uniformity in Religi-
 ‘ on and Government, which might lead us,
 ‘ and our Posterity after us, as Brethren, to live
 ‘ in Faith and Love. *Art. I.*

(3.) ‘ It is plainly contrary to that Extirpati-
 ‘ on of *Schism*, and whatsoever shall be found
 ‘ contrary to sound Doctrine, and the Power of
 ‘ Godliness, which we have sworn sincerely,
 ‘ really, and constantly to endeavour, without
 ‘ Respect of Persons. *Art. II.*

(4.) ‘ Hereby we shall be involv’d in the
 ‘ Guilt of other Mens Sins, and thereby be en-
 ‘ danger’d to receive of their Plagues. *Art. II.*

(5.) ‘ It seems utterly impossible, (if such To-
 ‘ leration should be granted) that the Lord
 ‘ should

should be one, and his Name one, in the three Kingdoms. *Art. II.*

(5.) ' This will palpably hinder the Reformation of Religion; inevitably divide one Kingdom from another; and unhappily make Parties and Factions among the People, contrary to this League and Covenant: Of which evil Offices whosoever shall be found guilty, are reputed, in the Words of the Covenant, Incendiaries, Malignants, or evil Instruments, to be discover'd, that they may be brought to publick Tryal, and receive condign Punishment. *Art. IV. and V.*

' These are some of the many Considerations which make deep Impression on our Spirits, against that great *Diana of Independents*, and all the Sectaries, so much cry'd up by them in these distracted Times; viz. *A Toleration, a Toleration.* And, however, none should have more rejoiced than our selves, in the Establishment of a Brotherly, Peaceable, and Christian Accommodation; yet, this being utterly rejected by them, we cannot dissemble how, upon the forementioned Grounds, we detest and abhor the much endeavour'd Toleration. Our Bowels, our Bowels are stirr'd within us; and we could even drown our selves in Tears, when we call to Mind, how long and sharp a Travell this Kingdom hath been in for many Years together, to bring forth that blessed Fruit of a pure and perfect Reformation: And now, at last, after all our Pangs, and Dolours, and Expectations, this real and thorough Reformation

formation is in Danger of being strangled in the Birth, by a lawless Toleration, that strives to be brought forth before it.

Wherefore, (*Reverend and beloved Brethren,*) we could not satisfy our selves, till we had made some Discovery of our Thoughts unto you about this Matter; not that we can harbour the least Jealousy of your Zeal, Fidelity, or Industry, in the opposing and extirpating of such a Root of Gall and Bitterness as Toleration is, and will be, both in present and future Ages; but that we may, what lies in us, endeavour mutually to strengthen one another's Resolutions against the present growing Evils; and that our Consciences may not smite us another Day for sinful Silence, or sluggish Deficiency, in any Point of Duty tending to the Glory of Christ, Honour of the Truth, Peace of the Church, Perfection of Reformation, Performance of our Covenant, and Benefit of present and succeeding Generations.

Subscrib'd by Us,

Your affectionate Brethren and Fellow-Labourers in the Work of the Ministry, to whom Truth and Peace is very precious.

From *Sion-College,*
London, Dec. 18.
1645.

I could

I could add the Sentiments of many other eminent Divines of the Separation, who, in their several Turns of Government, have express'd their great Abhorrence of Tolerating any Opinion in Religion, but what was then establish'd. But this being intended chiefly to inform the more Ignorant, I shall not swell this above the Power of most mean People to purchase it. However, I shall hint one Thing to our Dissenting Brethren, not a little remarkable, viz. The Government of *England*, the Church of which being establish'd under Episcopacy, hath granted Toleration to all Opinions of *Dissenters*, the which, 'tis well known, that not any one of them, when uppermost, would grant to any. Therefore, (*My Brethren*,) if the granting Liberty of Conscience, be in it self an Act of Condescension, Good-Nature, and Christian Charity; then it must be own'd, that the Church of *England*, under the Government by Bishops, has more Humility, more Humanity, and more Christian Love, than all the several Sects, take them altogether, of which the Separation is compos'd; which should induce People to consider, that where these Graces abound, they may expect true Piety. — And I am very sensible, that among those that have the greatest Prejudice to the Establish'd Worship of the Church of *England*, 'tis they that know the least of it; and indeed, through the Course of forty odd Years, I have observ'd the same.

The common People, who are generally very Ignorant, have been taught the Popular Cry of *Papery! Papery!* though not one in twenty, knows what it means: They know not, nor will believe, that the Priests of Rome, first gave that reproachful Epithet to the *Common-Prayer*, on purpose to make the unthinking People abhor it, and then to separate from it. And (God knows) they have been wofully successful herein, and have so blinded the Eyes of many well-meaning People, with relation to the *Common-Prayer*, that many of them think it to be no other than the *Mass-Book* it self: Others, that 'twas taken out of the *Mass-Book*: But if they knew the Antiquity of some of the Prayers, in the *Common-Prayer-Book*, which was long before any Notion of *Papery*, they would, and might justly say, the *Mass* was added to the *Common-Prayer*, by the Church of Rome; all which Errors were taken away at our *English Reformation*.

Some think meanly of our *Liturgy*, for that 'tis call'd *Common-Prayer*; but let such know, that good Prayers, with true Devotion, cannot be too common. But the most worthy, and ingenious Mr. Clutterbuck, in his *Vindication and Explanation of the Liturgy of the Church of England*, has rightly defin'd the same; which he has curiously done in few Words, by way of *Question* and *Answer*; I'll write both *Question* and *Answer*, *Verbatim*.

Q. Why

Q. Why is the Liturgy of the Church of England, call'd Common-Prayer?

A. Because all the Members have a Common Interest; and in that Form, all of the same Communion, are to joyn.

I would gladly recommend this Book, I now quoted, to all Masters of Families, (it being Bound at the Price of Nine-Pence) for two Reasons:

First, To those that are not joyn'd to the Establish'd Church, that they would peruse the *Common-Prayer-Book*, and then this *Explanation*, which will plainly shew them, wherein they have been mis-inform'd, with Relation to Idolatry or Superstition; and that in the said *Prayer-Book*, there is not the least Tendency to either; but that all the Parts of Prayer, such as *Confession*, *Absolution*, *Deprecation*, *Intercession*, *Thanksgivings*, &c. are so excellently laid together, in such pathetick and intelligible Expressions, that will edify the meanest, and as well the largest Capacities; being compil'd in most significant Words and Phrases; and, as adapted to all Conditions and Circumstances of Man, so address'd to the true God, and Holy Trinity, in the most proper Postures, and humble Gestures, and such as become us, when we address the Majesty of Heaven. The *Roman* Doctrines of *Indulgences*, *Transubstantiation*, *Prayers for the Dead*, *Invocation of Saints and Angels*, the Five Sacraments, of *Marriage*, *Orders*, *Confirmation*, *Penance*, and *Extream Unction*, add

to those Instituted by our Saviour, viz. *Baptism*, and the *Lord's Supper*; The *Superstition of Pilgrimages*, *Visiting of Shrines*, *Use of Holy Water*, as they call it, being enjoyn'd to be believ'd, on Pain of Damnation. These, and all other Doctrines, and Matters held by them, that are Dissonant to the Holy Scriptures, are by the Church of *England* abhorr'd and exploded; notwithstanding some that are Enemies to our Church, have maliciously and wickedly suggested, that we hold the same as well as *Rome*.

Secondly, To those People that are not actually of Us, for this little Tract will enflame their Love of it, by increasing their Devotion; and will also enable them to answer all Objections made against it.

And now, I presume, I have sufficiently demonstrated the Nature of *Schism*; and by the Sentiments of several of the ablest of the late *Dissenting Teachers*, made it appear to be not only a Sin, but a Sin of the first *Magnitude*, and not at any rate to be indulg'd to any.

I might here also make appear, how all the *Reform'd Churches of Christendom*, (that have had true State of the Controversy, between the Church of *England*, and those Natives that separate from it) have condemn'd and censur'd most severely, those that dissent from our establish'd Church, upon such trifling Pleas made use of by them, that if granted and allow'd, would make Way for almost as many

E

Separations,

Separations, as there are People in the Kingdom. For all Chimerical Persons, have such Opinions of their own Wisdom, in almost every Matter, especially in the weighty one of Religion, that nothing would be done to any Purpose, if such late not at the Helm, and were the principal Directors. But this I have reserv'd for a Tract of a greater Bulk than this; which, by the Blessing of God, may, in due Time, appear in the World; and I question not, to the Satisfaction of all unprejudic'd People.

Near the Beginning of this little Treatise I promis'd to make appear the dangerous Consequence of continuing in this Sin; but those worthy Divines before recited, having in their Sermons and other Writings, so clearly demonstrated, not only what is *Schism*, and its being a Sin of the deepest Dye; but also the evil Consequences of it in every respect, with relation to the Peace of the Church; the Security of the State; the Harmonious Agreement of the People in General; to all which it is destructive: But above all, and the most deplorable, the great Hazard of the *Eternal Welfare of Souls*. These having spoken so fully, have left no room for me to set forth any thing beyond their Aggravations.

But I think I may say thus much, That the least Sin, unrepented of, renders a Man liable to *Eternal Damnation*, what will be the Lot of those that live habitually in a Sin of this Complexion, with so many Aggravations attending

attending it, but by their continual provoking the Almighty in this Life, cause him to pour out upon them, the *Hottest Vials* of his Wrath, Eternally, in the World to come? The which I pray God they may prevent, by a speedy, sincere, Repentance, for continuing so long in this Sin; and a hearty Compliance with the *Establish'd Church*, by attending on its *Preaching*, by joyning with the *Parochial Assemblies* in the *Publick Worship*, and *Sacraments*: And if they thus do, the Church will graciously and affectionately receive them; the Members will rejoyce in their Fellowship; Party and Division will cease; our *Pious SOVERAIGN*, the best of PRINCES, will be easy in his Government, and happy in an Obedient and Loyal People: And our Land, instead of being an *Aceldama*, will justly be esteem'd the *Joy of the Earth*.

Such a Compliance will render our Circumstances not barely tolerable, but will exalt them beyond Expression: The Intrigues of Rome, for reducing this Church, which is their principal Design and Aim, to Popery, (viz. false Doctrines in Fundamentals, and Idolatry and Superstition in Worship) would be vain to such a Degree, that they would themselves despair of ever attaining those Ends, which they can never accomplish, but by Means of our Divisions. And I would to God, those that separate from us upon such trifling Plea's for which they contend, would seriously weigh, and lay these Things to Heart, and consider that 'tis extreamly in their Power, to prevent the Designs of the *Papists*, whose Hopes depend purely

upon our Disagreements; and who are secretly and continually fomenting them, against this Establish'd Church.

And such an harmonious Agreement among the good People of this Land, would not only (under God) secure the Establish'd Religion of *England*, but would likewise be a proper Means to secure the State; for that all Domestick Differences would cease; *Schism* would for ever want Essence; the terrible Fears of *Papery* would vanish; the Pretensions of the Gentleman at *Lorrain* ridicul'd; the Ambition and Power of *France* would be contemn'd; and the *BRITISH* Nation dreaded by the whole Universe.



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